(c) whether while purchasing an air ticket, the concerned person shall have to produce a medical fitness certificate; and

(d) how the patients shall be deprived of this facility/permitted to fly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The guidelines provide for certain steps to be taken by the airline operators to avoid the risk of transmission of tuberculosis during flight. The Government has issued a circular to all operators for compliance.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) According to guidelines issued by WHO, airline companies should deny boarding to any person who is known to have infectious turberculosis and is intending to travel on a flight whose total duration is likely to be at least eight hours.

New airport in Sikkim

1502. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of projects pending with the Central Government for construction of various airports in the country particularly in the State of Sikkim;

(b) the present status of these airports; and

(c) the details of financial allocation made so far by Government for construction of airports in the country especially in the State of Sikkim, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) At present, proposals relating to construction of new airports at Gangtok in Sikkim, Kohima in Nagaland, Chakan, Pune and Navi Mumbai in Maharashtra, Ajmer in Rajasthan, Kannur in Kerala, Itanagar in Arunachal Pradesh, Raiganj in West Bengal, Bharuch in Gujarat and Civil Enclave at Halwara in Punjab are being examined by the Government. There are well laid down procedures for development of greenfield airports and the abvoe proposals have to conform to the prescribed conditions before being considered for approval.

(c) The above proposals are at preliminary stages. Therefore, no financial allocation has so far been finalised.

Shortage of aircraft and helicopter pilots

†1503. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that country is facing acute shortage of pilots of aircrafts and helicopters as well;

(b) whether it is also a fact that DGCA does not have even one helicopter Pilot operations Inspector to examine qualifications and efficiency of about 150 helicopter pilots engaged in the country;

(c) if so, whether Government are considering to take any steps to meet shortage of qualified pilots; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Due to the growth in the aviation sector there is an increase in the number of scheduled and non scheduled operators with many of them going in for a fleet expansion programme. This has manifested in shortage of type rated pilots.

(b) Yes, Sir. The post of Inspector of Flying/Flight Operations Inspector (Helicopter) is vacant since 16.08.2004, due to shortage of eligible helicopters pilots in the country and the fact that no pilots from the Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and aviation industry are willing to serve as Flight Operations Inspector (Helicopter) because of the gap between the remunerations offered by PSUs/industry and the prescribed pay-scale for this post in Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). However, DGCA approved examiners are carrying out skill test of pilots to ensure safety in operation. Also services of Helicopter Advisor from European Union attached with Helicopter Cell in DGCA are being utilised by DGCA.

(c) and (d) The Government has taken various steps to reduce the gap between demand and supply of skilled pilots. These include

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.